

REMARKS

Claims 3, 4, 6-18, 20-26 and 31-33 remain pending in this application. Applicants wish to thank the Examiner with respect to the suggestion made about claim 31. In accordance to the Examiner's suggestion, Applicants have amended claim 31 to recite "fixing of the toner image on the transfer material by a fixing device."

Claim Rejections -35- USC § 112

The Examiner asserts that there "is no disclosure of these other components and no disclosure of providing a heat source in any of these other components (e.g., belts, plate, etc.) included within the scope of the claims."

However, in addition to the description in the case of using a fixing roller and a pressing roller which is set forth on pages 78, 90, 91, 105, and 106 (at the lines noted on page 13 of Applicants' previous response), there is the disclosure of other components such as "belts" shown in Figs. 17 and 18.

That is, as shown in Fig. 17, it is also appropriate that a fixing device 17A is made up of a fixing roller 17a composed of a halogen lamp Hla built inside and a metallic pipe 171a coated with a rubber layer 172a outside, a fixing belt 27 positioned opposite to the fixing roller 17a stretched around rollers for stretching TRa and TRb, both made as a hard roller made of a metal material, and a tension roller TRt. (See page 139, lines 11-18) Between the fixing roller 17a and the fixing belt 27, there is formed a nip portion N, where a toner image composed of a flattened toner on a recording sheet P is fixed. (See page 140, lines 1-3) Thus, by the heat of the fixing roller 17a and the pressure caused by the tension of the fixing belt 27 (under the application of pressure), a toner image composed of flattened toner particles on the recording paper sheet P are fixed (firmly attached to the recording paper sheet P) (see page 140, lines 12-17).

Further, as shown in Fig. 18, it is also appropriate to make up a fixing device 17B of a fixing roller 17c, which comprises a halogen lamp Hla inside, and is composed of a metallic pipe 171a and a somewhat harder rubber roller layer 172c and a rubber hardness on the outer surface of the metallic pipe, a first fixing roller 47a as a soft roller made of a somewhat softer rubber material, a fixing belt 27A stretched around the fixing roller 17c and the first fixing roller 47a,

and a second fixing roller 47b which is positioned opposite to the first fixing roller 47a with the fixing belt 27A held in between (see page 143, lines 7-18). A nip portion N is formed between the first fixing roller 47a as a somewhat softer roller and the second fixing roller 47b as a somewhat harder soft roller with the fixing belt 27A held in between, and it is fixed a toner image composed of flattened toner particles on a recording paper sheet P to be introduced into the nip portion N through a guide plate PAa (see page 144, lines 1-7). Thus, by the heat of the fixing belt 27A which is heated by the fixing roller 17c and the pressure caused by the first fixing roller 47a and the second fixing roller 47b (under the application of pressure by the first fixing roller 47a and the second fixing roller 47b), a toner image composed of flattened toner particles on the recording paper sheet P are fixed (firmly attached to the recording paper sheet P) (see page 144, line 17 through page 145, line 1).

Moreover, coming back to the embodiment using a fixing roller 17a and a pressing roller 17b shown in Fig. 15, which was explained in our previous proposed response, “The recording paper sheet P is gripped by the nip portion N which is formed between the fixing roller 17a and the pressing roller 17b, and by the application of heat and pressure, the superposed component color toner images composed of flattened toner particles are fixed” (see 78, lines 15-19, for example).

In any case, as shown in Figs. 15, 17 and 18, the recording sheet P is gripped by the nip portion N, and by **the application of heat and pressure**, the component color toner images composed of flattened toner particles are fixed.

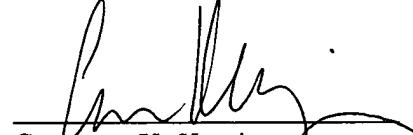
Therefore, Applicants believe that the claims 3, 17 and proposed amended claim 31 relating to “a fixing device” are **not** beyond the scope of the specification disclosure, because there is the disclosure of providing a heating source in the other components such as belts

included within the scope of the claims. In sum, the claims are described by the specification as filed and do **not** include new matter.

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Squire, Sanders & Dempsey L.L.P.
One Maritime Plaza, Suite 300
San Francisco, CA 94111
Telephone (415) 954-0200
Facsimile (415) 391-2493

Respectfully submitted,


Cameron K. Kerrigan
Attorney for Applicants
Reg. No. 44,826